

Action Plan

## THE ACTION PLAN

This section of the report provides an action plan that addresses issues identified in the technical analysis during phase one and the Goals and Objectives developed by the Lewisville 2010 Goals Committee in phase two. The action plan is presented as six initiatives, which taken together comprise a Comprehensive Neighborhood and City-wide Planning program for the City of Lewisville.

### 1. Strengthen Neighborhoods and Housing

One of Lewisville's strengths is its neighborhoods and the wide variety of housing provided its citizens. A wide range of housing types, from affordable housing to mid-level and up-scale housing are characteristic of Lewisville neighborhoods. Approximately 16 percent of the City's housing is under \$60,000, with 77 percent between \$60,000 and \$125,000, and 7 percent over \$125,000 in value.

Lewisville has older established neighborhoods, as well as a growing number of new neighborhoods. The older neighborhoods are in the Old Town and Central Lewisville areas and range from 20 to 74 years in age. Newer residential areas are in the northwest and southwest parts of Lewisville. Considerable new construction is occurring in these areas today.

During the Goal setting process, a vision of Lewisville's neighborhoods emerged. This vision sees Lewisville having neighborhoods with affordable as well as up-scale housing attractive to professionals and business executives. Neighborhoods are clean and well maintained; recreation facilities provide activities supportive of the community's family atmosphere; crime is low; and people feel safe in their neighborhoods.

While the majority of Lewisville's neighborhoods are stable today, there are some residential areas that have emerging characteristics of neighborhoods that are on the decline. These characteristics include such de-stabilizing influences as increasing tenant occupancy; declining maintenance levels in private and public infrastructure; and increasing cut-through and neighborhood traffic.

Without a concerted City response early in the process of neighborhood decline, blighting effects can rapidly spread to entire sections of a community. This initiative discusses the issues that are key to strengthening Lewisville's neighborhoods and housing and makes recommendations to address stabilizing, maintaining, and enhancing Lewisville's neighborhoods.

#### Recommendation

**The City of Lewisville should develop a Neighborhood Assistance Program to address neighborhood stabilization.**

This program should have both public and private neighborhood involvement and should include:

- Development of a neighborhood planning process.
- Provide staff assistance to neighborhood organizations as possible when requested.
- Implementation of a neighborhood code enforcement program.
- Continuation of the Community Policing Program and coordination with neighborhood organization activities.

One of the key assets identified by Lewisville residents is the strength and quality of existing neighborhoods and the opportunities provided within those neighborhoods. Maintaining this

valuable resource of quality neighborhoods is critical to Lewisville's future.

As older areas of the City start to show signs of decline, it is important to immediately identify and address the issues that are the source of the decline, and to reverse the trend so that the area has the characteristics of an improving neighborhood, rather than one in decline.

Often, residents are the first to recognize negative trends occurring within a neighborhood. For this reason, it is important to enable residents to identify any emerging problems and to develop and implement solutions for those problems. The following recommendations for a Neighborhood Assistance Program would set up a framework at the City to help citizens organize to address neighborhood problems. Tools which can be used by the City and residents to provide stability to neighborhoods are also identified.

A Neighborhood Assistance Program should be responsive - where the City develops a basic framework for responding to citizen initiatives.

In general, Neighborhood Assistance Programs which respond to citizen initiatives are more successful because neighborhood residents are involved from the beginning, have a vested interest in the plans or policies that are developed, and will continue to monitor established programs after the City has completed public sector activities.

A Neighborhood Assistance Program with the following components is recommended for the City of Lewisville:

**Provide limited assistance to neighborhood organizations**

Strong, organized neighborhood groups are key to maintaining healthy neighborhoods over the long term. Neighborhood organizations also give the City an organized group to work with on planning-related issues.

Neighborhood organizations can help maintain a healthy neighborhood by being active in items such as enforcing deed restrictions, implementing crime watch programs, initiating neighborhood cleanups, maintaining green spaces and rights-of-ways, developing a neighborhood directory, providing a network for elderly and handicapped residents, and providing general City information to residents on such issues as nuisance ordinances.

In addition to working with a City on neighborhood maintenance issues, neighborhood organizations can work with a City on more complex issues requiring detailed input on planning programs. Having an organized group to work with the City on planning projects will establish needed programs which are more likely to succeed than ones which are forced on a neighborhood. Neighborhoods can assist in planning activities by identifying issues and needs; determining the mechanisms which will work best for the neighborhood; assisting in implementing any improvement programs; and then monitoring long term improvements.

**Implement a neighborhood planning process**

A neighborhood planning process is key to stabilizing declining neighborhoods.

Neighborhood planning takes many of the City's existing programs and resources and facilitates their use in targeted areas. Neighborhood planning can either begin with residents who have identified problems in their neighborhood and who want to see specific issues addressed, or can be City initiated. Either way, it is very important to identify neighborhood leaders who will promote the planning activities within the neighborhood early on in the planning process.

A neighborhood planning process with the following steps should be implemented for Lewisville:

- Planning process is initiated by the City in response to either citizen concerns or City concerns. Typically, a city will have increasing citizen complaints regarding recurring problems such as cut-through traffic, incompatible uses, nuisances, etc. The city then conducts a systematic analysis of data, which results in indications that there are problems that need to be addressed, such as declining property values or declining maintenance levels.
- Initial neighborhood meetings are held to identify issues, problems, goals and objectives
- Planners collect base-line information on the neighborhood to determine existing conditions, such as land use, zoning, housing types and trends, City services, thoroughfares, public safety, and infrastructure conditions.
- A neighborhood meeting is held to present the existing condition data and to enable the neighborhood to reach a consensus on the goals and issues.
- This information is analyzed along with the information collected during the initial neighborhood meetings, and possible solutions are formulated.
- These potential solutions are reviewed with City departments to determine if the proposals are feasible, to ensure consistency with other departmental programs, to consider any resulting budget impacts, and to ensure that resources are available for implementation. The potential solutions are refined as needed.
- Potential solutions are discussed with neighborhood representatives. The neighborhood arrives at a consensus on recommendations and an implementation plan is developed.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council review and adopt the recommendations and implementation plan.

The neighborhood planning process helps residents focus on real neighborhood problems and also helps them identify solutions. Through the neighborhood planning process, residents become informed about City government and the limitations that the City has in addressing all neighborhood issues. Neighborhood planning can assist residents in organizing and helping to implement improvement programs.

Neighborhood planning programs require active involvement of City planning staff, because City staff is available, and can develop long-term working relationships with residents.

Outside planning assistance should be used to supplement work of the planning staff when:

- some specialized technical expertise is needed;
- needed resources are not available on staff, or
- the issue requires a third party to help bring the neighborhood and the City together.

In all cases, the lead in working with the neighborhood should be the City staff.

Specific examples of problems that neighborhoods could face that would require a land use plan and the resulting solutions that could be reached through neighborhood planning include:

- Resolving land use conflicts with adjacent commercial property.  
Solution: Landscaping and buffering requirements.
- Developing neighborhood improvement plans to address issues of litter, unpainted homes, required lighting, etc.

**Solution:** Development of a target code enforcement program combined with a fix-up/paint-up program; and a beautification program with landscaping improvements. Offer target neighborhood code enforcement. Code enforcement is a key issue in older neighborhoods experiencing de-stabilizing pressures because these areas are in transition, with both an established set of residents who desire high levels of maintenance of their properties, as well as a growing number of rental properties that do not have the level of maintenance of those occupied by homeowners. Neighborhoods with high levels of rental properties typically have a greater number of code violations than those occupied by homeowners. In addition, older, established neighborhoods may have an aging population who cannot afford to maintain their property as required.

To assist residents who are not able or cannot afford to provide the required levels of maintenance, an assistance program should be available with the targeted code enforcement. This assistance program can be both public and private, with the neighborhood organization assisting in improvements such as mowing and trash removal, and the City providing funding for paint and other basic improvements. An assistance program should be based on need, with standards created to administer any public funding.

A target neighborhood code enforcement program can be developed out of a neighborhood planning program, or independently. The primary difference between a target area program and the City's current level of code enforcement is that an area is targeted for intense code enforcement, and the code enforcement is proactive, rather than responsive to complaints.

A Target Area Code Enforcement Program should have the following components:

- Either staff or a neighborhood organization identifies code enforcement problems. If identified by a neighborhood organization, staff confirms existence of problems through analysis of data to ensure there is a need for the program. Program is initiated after confirmation.
- Define project area through analysis of data; identify services available for improvements; and identify roles for City and homeowner groups.
- Before code enforcement begins, the City notifies owners in the neighborhood in writing of the Target Code Enforcement Program, explains typical violations, and encourages residents to comply with City code before the program is initiated. This document should also serve as an information brochure on the benefits of long term property maintenance. A phone number is provided for additional information. A neighborhood association could also distribute flyers throughout the neighborhood so that both owners and renters are aware of the program. This also lets residents know that the code enforcement program is sanctioned by area residents.
- On the start-up day, code enforcement staff inspects the neighborhood property by property, and issues warnings about violations. Violators are given a specific time period in which to comply, such as two weeks.
- Code enforcement staff returns for a re-inspection of those properties that received warnings, and tickets are issued. Code enforcement staff continues to work these properties to bring them into compliance.

In addition to the City's work, a neighborhood organization can become involved to assist in code enforcement activities by forming a neighborhood code enforcement task force that sends out notices to properties that do not comply, asking for their compliance before they are turned into the City code enforcement department. Residents can also assist elderly homeowners in bringing property into compliance.

#### **Rezone residential areas which are currently zoned for commercial uses**

There are several areas where residential neighborhoods are zoned for commercial uses. These areas are currently protected by deed restrictions. As deed restrictions run out, these areas are no longer protected from commercial encroachment, which has a de-stabilizing effect on neighborhoods. Unprotected neighborhoods are a disincentive to maintenance, which will lead to deteriorating residential areas.

Neighborhoods which are commercially zoned should be rezoned to an appropriate residential district. Those parts of Lakeland Terrace zoned General Business (GB) but developed and used for single family residential uses are examples of neighborhood areas which should be rezoned. The City should initiate rezoning efforts only with the support of the property owners involved.

#### **Coordinate community policing program**

Integrating the existing community policing program into the neighborhood planning process would benefit both neighborhood stability and the policing program. Neighborhood organizations can support police activities, and neighborhood meetings would give the police department a forum for communicating with residents in identifying problem areas.

Neighborhood organizations can also serve as advisory groups to the Police Department. The Community Policing Program should be extended to additional neighborhoods as resources are available in conjunction with neighborhood planning programs or the organization of neighborhood groups.

#### **Recommendation**

**The City of Lewisville should develop and use a housing investment program to improve the environment for reinvestment in existing neighborhoods.**

The following components should be considered for inclusion in a reinvestment program:

- Increased attention to the maintenance of infrastructure in older neighborhoods.
- Development of stronger working relationships with local banks to encourage community lending. Recruit additional financial institutions to develop community lending within Lewisville.

Lewisville has a large resource of housing available for starter homes. This housing is a resource for people starting out who want to invest in Lewisville and also gives children who were raised in Lewisville the opportunity to continue living in and contributing to Lewisville. Much of this housing is in areas which, with reinvestment in the area, will grow and stabilize, but without it, will increasingly turn over to rental property and thus become more susceptible to decline. The stabilization initiatives listed earlier, as well as the additional recommendations below, create an improved environment for reinvestment in Lewisville's neighborhoods.

The Neighborhood Investment Program must have active participation of both the public and private sectors. The Lewisville Housing Finance Corporation and various grant funds can be used to supplement private participation.

### **Increase maintenance of infrastructure in older neighborhoods.**

Increase attention should be directed to the maintenance of infrastructure in older neighborhoods to provide an incentive to maintain property. City monitoring and maintenance of neighborhood infrastructure establishes a positive environment for reinvestment to occur. If the City does not maintain streets, curbs, gutters and sidewalks, homeowners are less likely to invest in their homes. If deteriorating streets and sidewalks are repaired or replaced, or planned to be improved, homeowners will also increase maintenance, because the public investment helps to establish the value of the neighborhood, and provides assurances to area owners that an investment in the neighborhood is sound. Since maintenance of infrastructure can be costly, a survey of needs of older neighborhoods should be made, and a long-term improvement plan established for funding these improvements.

### **Encourage community lending within Lewisville.**

The reinvestment environment can also be enhanced by working with local banks to encourage lending in certain areas. Often, lending institutions are not aware of a community's goal of promoting stability in older neighborhoods. Identifying target neighborhoods and educating loan officers on the City's goals can result in banks approving reinvestment loans that might otherwise have been denied. Loans are more likely to be approved once bank personnel are aware that a neighborhood they may have viewed as being in decline is a City targeted reinvestment area. In some cities, banks are playing an even more active role in neighborhood stabilization efforts by pledging a certain amount of funds to go toward reinvestment in declining areas.

To succeed in building stronger relationships with banks, the City and neighborhood groups, in addition to financial institutions, must also be involved:

- **City responsibilities** include establishing the goal of reinvestment; identifying need and locations; making lending institutions aware of goals; and maintaining infrastructure to reduce the lending institution's risk and to improve neighborhoods.
- **Neighborhood responsibilities** include organizing to assist the City in their reinvestment programs, maintaining private property; distributing information regarding lending programs, and utilizing the reinvestment programs available.
- **Financial institutions' responsibilities** are providing targeting lending programs; implementing a Community Development Corporation; and working with non-profit entities to rehabilitate neighborhoods or redevelop housing in the worst neighborhoods.

### **Recommendation**

**The City of Lewisville should implement Conservation District Policies and Regulations to stabilize existing neighborhoods.**

This should include:

- Development of policies which allow for modifications in development standards for specific areas in which strict implementation of current standards would be a detrimental to stabilization efforts. Such modifications might allow a blanket variance for something like the 70 percent brick requirement when an addition is being made to an existing frame house.
- Providing incentives for housing renovation

The older neighborhoods in Lewisville were developed under different regulations than are in effect today. This difference in regulations can cause problems when residents want to renovate or add on to their properties because their property does not comply with all existing City regulations. Under City code, properties must fully comply with City ordinances before permits will be issued for renovations or expansions in these older areas. This becomes a disincentive to reinvestment in older areas.

In addition, these neighborhoods can have characteristics that make them different from other areas because of the different rules under which they were built. These different characteristics give the area a special identity which can be diminished if properties are redeveloped and the new development is not consistent with the older parts of the neighborhood. The Council could amend the General Development Ordinance or adopt a policy to permit a more flexible set of development standards in older areas of the community.

It is important to provide flexibility within zoning and other development ordinances to accommodate and encourage housing renovations in older areas. Such flexibility will encourage the retention of and reinvestment in older neighborhoods. In addition, different regulations for these areas could also require that new development conform to the existing development so that the integrity of the area is maintained.

**Adopt a policy to permit the creation of conservation districts.**

Article 1011a, Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes, authorizes cities to regulate and restrict the construction, alteration, reconstruction, or razing of buildings and other structures in "designated places and areas of historic, cultural, or architectural importance and significance." Although this can be accomplished in certain cases by an amendment in the zoning ordinance, the City of Lewisville zoning ordinance deals with only a limited number of standards besides use, so it is recommended that a policy be adopted to allow the creation of conservation districts as a means of identifying neighborhoods which would benefit from a relaxation of certain General Development Ordinance requirements when specific conditions are met.

- Conservation districts may be initiated by the Planning and Zoning Commission or the City Council or by petition of property owners. A petition process should require that owners of a certain percentage of the land in question or of the owners of the building sites sign the request for a Conservation District. A common standard established by some cities is 50 percent of the land or owners.
- Criteria are included in the Conservation District enabling legislation to determine the eligibility of an area to be established as a Conservation District. Criteria could include the overall condition and stability of the area.
- Once an area is determined to be eligible, a Neighborhood Plan is developed. This Conceptual Plan outlines the areas to be preserved and establishes the concepts for incorporation in the conservation district policy for that area. The plan is prepared with the participation of area property owners.

- The Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council can then hold public hearings, and make final decisions regarding the plan. Once the Plan has been approved by the City Council, a formal Conservation District policy is drafted and reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council through the public hearing process.
- A conservation district can offer a relaxation of development standards in circumstances which now serve to restrict upgrading of structures. An example would be to not require brick on a residential addition if there is no brick on the existing structure, and any additional regulations or procedures necessary to conserve the distinctive atmosphere or character of the area.

#### **Recommendation**

The City of Lewisville should develop and adopt a policy dealing with the redevelopment of existing residential neighborhoods.

The major components of a redevelopment policy are:

- The establishment of policies to guide rezoning requests in existing residential areas adjacent to non-residential uses.
- Development of policies for rezonings adjacent to existing residential areas.

Fringe areas of neighborhoods that are located adjacent to non residential uses can come under pressure to redevelop thus leading to decline, rather than remaining a long-term neighborhood. For example the property south of the Lewisville Memorial Hospital could come under pressure to redevelop as the hospital and ancillary medical uses expand into the neighborhood. In addition, neighborhoods adjacent to non-residential uses experience pressure from zoning changes, and zoning changes which lead to adjacent incompatible uses can result in neighborhood decline.

Rezoning policies guide rezoning requests in areas adjacent to residential uses. Rezoning policies would give guidance to staff, the Planning Commission, and the City Council when evaluating zoning requests. In addition, rezoning policies would provide predictability to the development community by providing up front information on when rezonings are appropriate, and when they are not appropriate.

#### **Develop and implement redevelopment policies**

When redevelopment occurs in a piecemeal fashion over a period of years, the surrounding neighborhood can rapidly decline. If redevelopment occurs in a controlled and managed way, rather than a patchwork accumulation of property, the neighborhood has a higher likelihood of maintaining its quality as a place to live throughout the redevelopment period.

Redevelopment in certain transitional areas is appropriate, but policies to guide the redevelopment are required to ensure that the redevelopment is not detrimental to the surrounding neighborhoods. Redevelopment policies should encourage the continued maintenance and habitability of structures until the entire neighborhood is ready for redevelopment. Redevelopment policies should address: appropriate timing of zoning changes, requiring rezoning consistent with neighborhood rezoning policies, proposed traffic circulation patterns, proposed access, limited access to surrounding residential uses, and appropriate buffering and landscaping.

A redevelopment policy should address rezoning patterns, as well as encourage the retention of residential units, until overall redevelopment is planned, rather than allowing piecemeal

redevelopment to occur. Redevelopment policies:

- indicate the City's commitment to long-term stability of existing neighborhoods and the City's intent to maintain the neighborhood's viability.
- are a recognition that certain uses which provide community-wide benefits not available elsewhere may require rezoning residential property to non residential zoning to accommodate a facility's expansion plans. An example of a use which provides community-wide benefits not available elsewhere is a hospital which must expand around its base facility. Neighborhood retail or general retail uses which can be located elsewhere throughout the city are not uses which are typically addressed in a redevelopment policy.
- recognize that some neighborhoods may, despite the City's best efforts to maintain and/or enhance stability, decline to the point where redevelopment is required.

Under these circumstances, the City would consider rezoning existing residential uses to permit non-residential uses if:

- the residential property is owned by the requesting use, or if purchase contracts pending rezoning have been obtained;
- the area can accommodate the planned expansion of the non residential use or be complete in itself;
- the remaining neighborhood is large enough to be viable after the rezoning has occurred; and
- if traffic, circulation, access, and buffering can be put in place to protect the remaining neighborhood.

#### **Develop and implement rezoning policies**

Rezoning policies could include general analyses of compatible adjacent uses, interface between these uses, and locational criteria, such as minimum thoroughfare requirements.

Policies for rezoning adjacent to existing residential uses should include:

- an analysis of the compatibility of uses
- density and traffic impacts
- maintenance of adequate privacy
- hours of operation
- the ability of the non residential use to provide adequate buffering.

An example of a rezoning policy is: "Locate local commercial uses on the periphery of a neighborhood at the intersection of a collector and a principal arterial." Specific policies for Lewisville would consider existing development patterns, appropriate land use, and policies already established by City Council action.

#### **Recommendation**

**The City of Lewisville should develop and implement a Neighborhood Traffic Management Program.**

This program should have the following components:

- Enforcement of design requirements through the platting process for new development.
- Implementation of a traffic management program for existing neighborhoods.

Cut-through traffic, speeding on residential streets, and excessive on-street parking are all detrimental to neighborhood stability. These problems can be addressed in design regulations

for new areas but require traffic management modifications in older areas.

#### **Enforce design requirements through the platting process**

Lewisville's General Development Ordinance requires that "Residential streets shall be laid out in a manner to discourage use by through traffic." This requirement should continue to be enforced through the platting process, and subdivisions which do not conform to this requirement should not be approved.

#### **Implement a traffic management program**

Implementing a Traffic Management Program can address some problems of older subdivisions which are experiencing speeding and cut-through traffic. A Traffic Management Program establishes policies for eligibility for action, appropriate locations of stop signs, and the placement of no parking signs on residential streets.

**Eligibility for action:** Once a number of complaints have been received, the City collects data on the number of vehicles, actual speeds and traffic patterns. Following an analysis of this data, a determination is made as to the need for traffic management measures. Standards should be established for determining when these measures should be imposed.

**Stop signs:** Stop signs decrease cut through traffic by slowing down vehicles. Policies to address placement of stop signs based on appropriate locations (types of intersections), accident history, sight distance, school/pedestrian crossings, and existing and proposed patterns would guide the City in locating additional needed stop signs.

**No parking signs:** Excess parking on residential streets can be detrimental to a neighborhood. Excess parking can either result from the neighborhood's residential uses or from nearby non-residential uses. When the parking is a spillover from adjacent commercial and retail uses, the placement of no parking signs may be appropriate. Excessive parking on neighborhood streets should be evaluated on a case by case basis to determine the need for no parking signs.

An example of a need for no parking signs is if a day care center is built adjacent to a neighborhood. If patrons of the day care center find it more convenient to park on neighborhood streets than in the parking lot, the residents may desire the installation of no parking signs along the street. In this instance, the installation of signs may be warranted.

#### **Recommendation**

**The City of Lewisville should develop a stricter policy regarding the street light system.**

This program should include:

- Adding lights to the existing street light system at specific intervals and key locations with a goal of increased traffic safety.

A number of opportunities exist for adding lights to the City's street light system. These include ensuring that existing lights are in use by encouraging City workers to notice and report lights which are not working; accommodating and responding to citizen calls regarding malfunctioning lights; and establishing a policy to respond to citizen complaints within a certain time period, such as one week.

## 2. Enhance Economic Development

Lewisville is an expanding community. As Lewisville grows, economic development will become an increasingly important activity of the City. Lewisville is experiencing more and more competition with neighboring cities for regional development than ever before. While Lewisville holds a key location in the north central region, a proactive economic development program will ensure that Lewisville is poised to attract and accommodate regional growth.

A proactive economic development program can help maintain a balanced revenue source coming from residential and commercial uses in the City. Expansion in the commercial ad valorem tax base can help fund supportive infrastructure, capital improvement projects and the quality and level of services needed by the citizens. By having a proactive economic development program, Lewisville would have a frame work for being more responsive to opportunities for new development thereby increasing competitiveness with surrounding communities. By assisting existing businesses, older commercial areas also become more competitive and economically viable.

While Lewisville's current economic development program includes many of the components required for an effective program, economic development activities are, for the most part, completed in a responsive mode, rather than as a proactive program. Development of a program which proactively seeks to improve local economic conditions should be based on a Council adopted Strategic Economic Development Plan that identifies Lewisville's economic development goals and objectives and develops policies regarding the types of growth that should be targeted.

Implementation of a proactive economic development program would require a higher level of staffing and additional funding beyond that currently appropriated for economic development. However, an informal survey of neighboring competitive cities indicates that Lewisville appropriates significantly less in staffing and funding to economic development efforts than do other competing cities. Although a more proactive economic development program would require greater expenditures up front, it should be seen as an investment which would result in an expanded tax base that should cover the cost of the program and yield new benefits to the City.

### Recommendation

**The City of Lewisville should develop a Strategic Economic Development Plan to implement a proactive economic development strategy.**

An economic development plan will identify the tools and programs necessary to bring economic diversification, job creation, and income growth to Lewisville. A plan will also narrow Lewisville's economic development efforts to those programs that will specifically address Lewisville's economic development goals, rather than diluting economic development efforts through a shot-gun approach. An economic development plan for Lewisville should include the following items.

**Economic development goals and objectives:** The City council, City officials, and business leaders should develop and agree on a unified set of economic development goals for Lewisville. As a starting point the Goals of the City's economic development strategy should be:

- to develop job opportunities and expand the economy;
- to promote a positive business environment;
- to diversity the economic base with clean business; and
- to enhance the economic viability of existing business.

**Performance measures for evaluating progress:** The plan should outline objectives, or performance measures, that will enable Lewisville to monitor progress toward the stated goal. For example, progress might be measured by collecting, maintaining and analyzing economic, demographic and locational data for business in Lewisville, showing changes in job growth, personal and family income, and the relationship between industry types and between residential and non residential tax revenues. Monitoring performance will enhance Lewisville's competitiveness in developing a local business retention and assistance program and targeting specific industries for recruitment to Lewisville.

**Policies/programs to implement goals and objectives:** An effective economic development strategy should establish economic development policies and specific programs to implement Lewisville's goals and objectives. Economic development policies are specific measures which should be carried out, or tools which should be applied when making economic development decisions.

Lewisville should consider the following policies and programs, at a minimum.

**Create target industries policy**

A goal that has been identified for Lewisville is that the City should attract clean industries that produce jobs, that use existing infrastructure, and that provide salary levels consistent with those which are earned by people currently living in Lewisville. A concern was expressed that new jobs be filled by Lewisville residents, or people who would become Lewisville residents. These and other issues provide direction on the type of industries which should be targeted in Lewisville.

A policy which addresses the types of industries which should be targeted for recruitment to Lewisville should be developed based on an analysis to identify targeted industries. This analysis should provide information on the composition, trends and needs of identified growth industries and specific companies that have a high probability of relocating or expanding in Lewisville. Analyzing Lewisville's strengths and weaknesses; its existing business base, labor force availability, cost of conducting business, and sites available for targeted industries; and establishing target industries based on locational factors of Lewisville within industry growth sectors should also be included.

Targeting industries for Lewisville will provide direction on the types of industries which should be targeted for marketing, and also the types of materials which should be developed to market to those industries. This process also identifies existing industries which should be targeted in business expansion/promotion activities.

**Develop evaluation criteria for prospects**

Once a policy is developed regarding the types of industries which should be targeted, objective criteria should be developed to evaluate prospects based on the target industry data. Use of such criteria ensures that economic development efforts are focused on identified targeted industries and that the benefits of providing incentives outweigh the costs. Examples of evaluation criteria include:

- Is the industry one of the top 5 targeted industries?;

- Does the industry have the potential to provide a minimum of x number of new jobs to Lewisville?
- Is the business an existing Lewisville business with growth potential? and
- Do the benefits of attracting the industry to Lewisville outweigh the costs to the community?

Once developed, evaluation criteria will provide direction to economic development staff, and will assist in analyzing the appropriate programs to offer to potential or expanding businesses.

**Develop a business retention program in cooperation with the chamber of commerce and "Alliance" committee.**

The majority of new job creation comes from a community's existing businesses. An effective economic development program should be balanced -- not only focused on new industries -- but also on the problems, needs and opportunities of the community's existing business base.

The major components of a business retention strategy are:

- Building regular and strong lines of communications with existing businesses;
- Providing management and business support services;
- Providing quality infrastructure and service to business areas.

Building regular and strong lines of communications with these businesses might include the following types of actions:

- City development of a business inventory for business areas;
- Community meetings with businesses to discuss issues and problems;
- Presentations to the businesses, either through community meetings or through brochures mailed to them, of the City services available and how to access these services;
- Occasional feature articles in the Lewisville Horizon concerning what is happening in different business areas; and
- Individual meetings with businesses when they have particular problems that need to be addressed.

The intent of these actions is to build relationships based on a willingness of the City to assist businesses in accessing City services.

Providing management and business support services to existing businesses should include a number of actors in addition to the City. Specific actions within this component of the business retention strategy might include:

- Working with the Chamber of Commerce, local Universities, and others to develop assistance programs that provide help in developing business plans, loan applications, and other types of business systems;
- Working with the SBA in getting their programs to businesses in target areas;
- Promoting (SBA program name for using retired executives to assist businesses);
- Investigating with local banks the possibilities of creating loan pools for qualified businesses in target areas. Consider, as part of this, ways the City could participate to reduce risk for the banks. For example through partial capitalization of the loan pool, or through mentoring businesses that get loans with outside assistance provided by experience executives or other professionals.

The final component of this strategy is to provide quality infrastructure and service to business areas. This is the most direct way the City's commitment to the long term economic health of an area can be demonstrated. It establishes credibility as the City works with the businesses and other supportive organizations in carrying out other components of an overall business retention strategy. The most important aspect of providing services is to ensure prompt and efficient processing of development and other permit applications. In all interactions with the City, courteous treatment and a customer service attitude must be maintained.

#### **Use joint public/private partnerships**

Effective economic development programs usually have a partnership approach with both public and private sector participation. The amount and type of participation from each sector can vary, depending on resources available and the type of program being administered. Public programs can involve training on how to work cooperatively with the business community and private efforts can focus on more of the business service side of economic development.

When new economic development programs or specific proposals are brought to the City, policies which address the nature and extent of any public/private partnerships should be developed and approved by the council. Policies should specify the roles, responsibilities, funding, timing, and other specifics of carrying out the proposal.

#### **Develop policy on use of tax incentives**

Policies should be established that set minimum standards for entering into a tax incentive program. Policies should include minimum number of new jobs required and priority areas where new industries should be encouraged.

Public/private development programs which could be explored. Any programs allowed by state law should be explored, including tax abatement, infrastructure cost participation, development fee rebates, public improvement districts and tax increment districts.

Public/private development programs should only be implemented following the development of programs and policies and the agreement on a plan for the improvements and services which will be accomplished.

#### **Promote quality development**

Policies that promote quality development through appropriate regulations are critical to an economic development program. Promoting economic development does not mean decreasing regulations that promote quality development. Regulations need to be consistent with the high quality development currently in the region, so that Lewisville remains competitive. If regulations are waived, competitiveness in Lewisville is decreased, and the value of properties that have been developed in a high quality way is also diminished.

#### **Consider use of special districts**

The City of Lewisville should explore using Public Improvement Districts and Tax Increment Financing to achieve economic development goals. Special Districts are tools to raise funds for existing development that is revitalizing. Special districts can provide amenities such as landscaping, public safety, infrastructure improvements, maintenance and enhanced business services, such as promotion and marketing. Special districts are an effective tool to bring together a number of independent owners to pool together financial resources and achieve increased services.

### Recommendation

**The City of Lewisville should fund a proactive economic development program using the sales tax for economic development purposes.**

The Texas legislature has enacted laws authorizing a city to fund its economic development program using 1/2 cent sales tax if approved by the voters of the municipality. The tax can fund utilizing the city's personnel and services for the purpose of economic development or the municipality can fund an industrial development corporation to implement economic development programs.

This local-option, voter approved, additional sales tax for economic development purposes can be one-eighth, one-fourth, three-eighths, or one-half of one percent, as long as the combined local sales tax rate does not exceed two percent.

A sales tax levied to fund economic development activities is a viable option for Lewisville because of the regional draw of Lewisville's retail uses. People outside of Lewisville make their purchases within the city, and use city services. Data suggests that cities surrounded by bedroom communities can have as much as 70 percent of their sales tax receipts come from the surrounding communities. A sales tax for economic development would be one way to have these people in adjacent communities contribute to Lewisville's economy, and to help pay for some of the services they use.

The Development Corporation Act requires the following procedures for implementation of the economic development sales tax:

- The city may create an industrial development corporation to carry out industrial development programs.
- The city can initiate an election on the sales tax, or an election shall be called if the Council is presented with a petition signed by at least ten percent of the city's registered voters.
- An election to limit the period of time during which the economic development sales tax shall be in effect is also allowed.
- This law also allows the city, on its own initiative, or on petition of ten percent of the city's registered voters, to place in the sales tax ballot proposition a provision that limits the use of the tax to a specific project.
- The Municipal Sales and Use Tax Act (Chapter 321) governs the election to authorize the sales tax.
- Ten percent or more of the registered voters of the city can request an election on the dissolution of the corporation.

### Recommendation

**The City of Lewisville should consider implementing Public Improvement Districts and Tax Increment Financing Districts in targeted areas of the City.**

Public Improvement Districts and Tax Increment Financing Districts provide a means for local property owners to participate financially in implementation of improvement plans and revitalization efforts. These special districts can establish a framework for a private/public partnership and strengthen property owners' abilities to pool resources to accomplish improvements. In addition, they help focus financial resources in one area and are an incentive for property owners to work toward common goals shared with the City. Public Improvement Districts and Tax Increment Financing Districts are tools to use to implement

specific plans, programs, and policies that have been developed through a planning process and that are agreed upon by property owners, city officials and other participants.

#### **Establishing public improvement districts**

The State has granted municipalities the power to create a Public Improvement District where a special benefit is conferred on a definable part of the city. The Public Improvement District may be to undertake "projects" or "services". The PID provides a way of funding the projects or services through a special assessment. Typically these districts are established in partnership with local property owner organizations to implement a defined plan of action agreeable to both the property owners and the city.

The following types of things can be done under a Public Improvement District:

Improvements which may include:

- landscaping;
- distinctive lighting and signs;
- acquisition, construction, improvement, widening, narrowing, closing, or rerouting of streets, sidewalks, roadways or their ROW's;
- acquisition, construction, improvement of: water, waste water, or drainage facilities, libraries, off-street parking facilities, mass transit facilities;
- construction or improvement of pedestrian malls, erection of fountains, acquisition and installation of art;
- or other similar improvements; and
- acquisition of real property for the improvements.

Special supplemental services may include, but are not limited to, services related to:

- advertising;
- promotion;
- health and sanitation;
- water and waste water;
- public safety;
- security;
- business recruitment;
- development;
- recreation and cultural enhancements; and
- expenses incurred in the establishment, administration and operation of the district.

The Public Improvement District process starts with a petition filed by owners of real taxable property in the proposed district. The process must comply with state law.

A municipality can pay its assessment from general funds, available general improvement funds, revenue or general obligation bonds. While an improvement is in progress, the city may also issue temporary notes and time warrants to pay for the improvements, and on completion of the improvements, issue revenue or general obligation bonds.

#### **Establishing tax increment financing districts**

The purpose of a Tax Increment Financing District is to promote development or redevelopment of a targeted area if the governing body determines that development or redevelopment would not occur solely through private investment in the foreseeable future. Some capital projects, while benefiting the public at large, may have their primary benefits on property in a specific area. These projects tend to be projects beyond basic services, that

provide amenities to an area. To the extent such projects increase the tax value of the private property, they could be funded through the use of a Tax Increment Financing District. TIF districts are future increases in the taxes collected on improved properties to fund public improvements that induced a raise in tax value.

To be designated as a Tax Increment Financing District, conditions within an area must comply with state law. This may include:

- substantially arrest or impair the sound growth of the city, retard the provision of housing accommodations, or constitute an economic or social liability and be a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; or
- be predominantly open and, because of obsolete platting, deterioration of structures or site improvements, or other factors, substantially impair or arrest the sound growth of the city; or
- be in an area described in a petition requesting designation as a reinvestment zone, the petition should be submitted to the city by the property owners of at least 50 percent of the appraised value of the property according to the most recent certified appraisal roll for the county.

Costs which can be included in a Tax Increment Financing District include capital costs; financing costs; real property assembly costs; professional service costs; administrative costs; relocation costs; organization/study costs; interest; operation cost of zone and project facilities; contributions made by the city; and payments made at the discretion of the city.

State law outlines the procedure but the following steps are usually involved when creating a Tax Increment Financing District:

- Prepare preliminary financing plan for the zone.
- Hold public hearings on the creation of the zone and the benefits to the city.
- Notify other taxing units (county and school district).
- Adopt the reinvestment zone by ordinance.
- Appoint a board of directors.

Municipalities have the following powers under the Tax Increment Financing District:

- Prepare, approve and implement the plans;
- Acquire and sell real property to implement the plan;
- Enter into agreements;
- Preserve or restore historic sites;
- Beautify or conserve; and
- Acquire, construct, reconstruct, or install public works, facilities, sites or other public improvements, including utilities, streets, street lights, water and sewer facilities, pedestrian malls and walkways, parks, flood and drainage facilities, educational facilities, and parking facilities.

The city approves the financing plan which includes:

- estimated project costs;
- list of the kind, number and location of all proposed public works or public improvements;
- economic feasibility study;
- estimated amount of bonded indebtedness to be incurred;

- time when related costs or monetary obligations are to be incurred;
- description of the methods of financing;
- current total appraised value of taxable real property;
- estimated captured appraised value of the zone during each year of existence; and
- duration of the zone.

The amount of the tax increment is determined as the amount levied on the captured appraised value of real property. The captured appraised value is based on the total appraised value for the current year less the tax increment base. The tax increment base is the total appraised value of property the year the zone was designated.

Tax increment deposits and all other revenues to be used in the investment zone shall be deposited in a specified fund. Money may be disbursed from the fund only to satisfy claims of holders of tax increment bonds or notes issued for the zone, to pay project costs for the zone, or to make payments pursuant to an agreement.

The city submits annual reports on the status of the zone to each taxing unit. The report must include:

- the amount and source of revenue in the fund;
- the amount and purpose of expenditures from the fund;
- the amount and purpose of expenditures from the fund;
- the amount of principal and interest due on outstanding bonded indebtedness;
- tax increment base and current captured appraised value retained by the zone; and
- the captured appraised value shared by the city and other taxing units, the total amount of tax increments received and any additional information necessary to demonstrate compliance with the financing plan adopted by the city.

### 3. Revitalize Old Town Lewisville

Old Town Lewisville is where Lewisville started. It contains the original commercial center and the town's oldest residential neighborhoods. For years it was the heart and center of the community. Resident input during the Goals setting process reflected positive feelings about Old Town coupled with concern for its current condition and future prospects.

The Old Town planning area is characterized by a number of factors that indicate decreased competitiveness with other parts of Lewisville and the beginning of decline. Old Town has the oldest housing, smallest dwelling unit sizes, and lowest overall value of land and improvements. Most housing in the area is over 36 years old, ranges from 500 square feet to 1,360 square feet in size and ranges in value from \$14,000 to \$53,700. Tenant occupancy of single family housing is among the highest in Lewisville with some neighborhoods having over 33 percent of the dwelling units occupied by renters.

The demographics of Old Town also indicate an area where assistance is needed to stabilize and maintain the quality of neighborhoods. The population of Old Town tends to be older on the average than other neighborhoods in Lewisville. It is also poorer, with median incomes in the \$27,500 to \$35,000 range. The combination of less capacity to maintain housing and housing in need of higher levels of maintenance increases potential for further decline without additional assistance.

Commercial development within the Old Town area shows a wide range of diversity from the commercial development in the old downtown center at Main Street and Mill Street to the small scale, scattered site, industrial development in the Kealy Addition, to the newer industrial park development in the Hillside Office Park Addition. Two areas in particular are in need of additional assistance in becoming more competitive with newer areas of Lewisville. These are the old Downtown area (Old Town Center) and the industrial development in the Kealy Addition (Kealy Industrial).

Old Town as a whole is a valuable community asset. The existing neighborhoods provide affordable housing and support economic diversity within the City. It has a solid core of residential uses that if maintained and enhanced as recommended in the housing and neighborhoods initiative discussed earlier in this action plan, will provide quality neighborhoods for years to come. To compliment and support neighborhood revitalization, increased attention to the revitalization of the commercial and industrial areas is also needed.

#### Recommendation

**The City of Lewisville should develop and implement a program for the revitalization of Old Town Center.**

It should include:

- Development of a strong working relationship with the Old Town Business Association;
- Creation of conservation districts to conserve the unique architectural and historic qualities of the area;
- Development of a policy for each conservation district which allows a waiver of specific development standards that inhibit the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of the existing physical fabric of the area, as long as policy criteria is met; and
- The implementation of special financial strategies to fund elements of the program.

### **Develop a strong working relationship with the Old Town Business Association.**

Successful area revitalization programs require a partnership between area property owners and tenants and the City. Developing a strong working relationship with the business interests in the Old Town Center area provides a forum for the development of common objectives for the area, identification of issues and opportunities, and the development of detailed plans for improvement. The ability of the Old Town Business Association to speak on behalf of owner and tenant interests provides the partner the City would work with in carrying out revitalization activities.

To develop a strong working relationship with the Old Town Business Association the following actions should be taken:

- The City adopts overall objective to work with the Old Town Business Association in the revitalization of the Old Town Center.
- The City identifies a staff person responsible for working with the Old Town Business Association as a liaison.
- If there is sufficient interest on the part of the Old Town Business Association at the initial meeting, they should begin to organize themselves in a manner that allows them to function as the private sector partner in the revitalization of Old Town Center. City staff works with the group during this organizational development process to provide initial staff support related to project definition, clarification and refinement of the City's role and responsibility in the overall process. The Old Town Business Association should consider having its own staff support as the project evolves.

Once an initial working relationship with the City is established, the next step is to develop a detailed revitalization plan for the area using the concepts in this report as a starting point. The details of what gets done and how should come from the working partnership between the City and the Old Town Business Association.

### **Create a conservation district for Old Town Center.**

One of the key assets of the Old Town Center area is its unique architectural and historic character. As the area is revitalized it will be important to protect the architectural and historic character of the existing buildings and ensure that new development is compatible with this character. One potential tool for doing this is to identify a conservation district area and develop a policy to allow staff to waive specific development standards when certain criteria are met. A conservation district for Old Town Center could be one of the first districts created under this proposed policy.

The development requirements contained in the City's General Development Ordinance and development code are designed primarily for new development on vacant land. To use these regulations within an already built area, demolition, land assembly, and a change in the character of development is required. This works counter to the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, the conservation of the existing design features, and the construction of compatible and complementary new development.

The conservation district provides a vehicle for allowing a waiver of some of the land use development requirements that may be inhibiting renovation and adaptive reuse. Typically these might include standards such as parking requirements, primarily in terms of the inability to have shared parking, off-site parking lots to meet parking requirements for individual uses; and in some cases requiring too many spaces for uses that are small scale.

an additional assessment to fund improvements or services. In most such districts, services are the focus of PID's. (See the discussion under Economic Development)

#### **Recommendation**

The City of Lewisville should explore the feasibility of developing and implementing a program for industrial revitalization in the Kealy Addition Area of Old Town.

Elements of this program should include:

- Development of a revitalization plan for the area;
- Targeting a business retention strategy to this area.

#### **Develop Kealy Industrial Area revitalization plan**

If the City Council finds it feasible and in the best interest of all concerned, actions might include:

- The City adopts overall objective to work with Kealy Industrial area business interests in the revitalization of the Kealy Industrial area.
- The City identifies a staff person responsible for working with the business organization as a liaison.
- If there is sufficient interest on the part of the business interests at the initial meeting, they proceed to organize themselves into a business organization that is capable of being the private sector partner in the revitalization of the Kealy Industrial Area. City staff works with the group during this organizational development process to provide initial staff support, meeting space, clarification and refinement of the City's role and responsibility in the overall process. Once organized, the business organization should have its own staff support if needed.

Once the organization is created, the City should work with them to develop a revitalization plan for the area. The plan should deal with two main physical development issues:

- the improvement of the physical infrastructure in the area and its up-grading to industrial district standards; and
- the current residential and industrial land use pattern in the area and its relationship to the long-range use pattern for the area.

The Kealy Industrial Area developed over time by a lot-by-lot redevelopment of the original residential uses. This has resulted in basic infrastructure that is inadequate for industrial development and not in keeping with modern industrial park standards. This substantially reduces the market competitiveness of this area. In addition, the piece-meal nature of the redevelopment process resulted in a land use pattern that left residential uses in and amongst the industrial uses. This pattern is not conducive to the stability and quality of the residential neighborhood, and inhibits further industrial development of the area.

The physical infrastructure should be upgraded by:

- reconstructing the streets to have right-of-way widths, pavement thicknesses, and turning radii consistent with industrial district standards in Lewisville;
- building drainage facilities into the streets at the time they are reconstructed; and
- up-grading water and sewer facilities and electrical and gas services consistent with industrial park standards.

The current land use pattern with its mix of residential and industrial uses must be dealt with. Residential areas that can be stabilized and made into a viable neighborhood should be identified.

In developing, in conjunction with the Old Town Business Association, a revitalization plan for the Old Town Center, the specific development requirements that need to be changed can be identified. The City should be committed to amending those development regulations that can be shown to inhibit reinvestment or destroy important design characteristics. In evaluating proposed changes the City should consider:

- The life-safety aspects of the proposed changes and whether or not an equivalent or superior means of achieving the required level of protection is available.
- The impact of regulatory changes on surrounding residential neighborhoods (for example, if less parking is required, will parking spill over into adjacent residential neighborhoods).
- The availability of facilities to meet the needs of the area and the property owner's willingness to help provide such facilities.

**Consider financial strategies to fund elements of the program.**

In addition to a strong private/public partnership guided by a mutually developed program plan and amended development requirements to address physical issues, the successful revitalization of the Old Town Center requires a funding strategy to assist in the implementation of the program. Three of the programs allowed by state law as funding strategies for the revitalization of Old Town Center are: (1) the funding of capital improvements through the City's Capital Improvements Program; (2) the use of a Tax Increment Finance district to supplement City capital projects, and (3) the funding of the on-going operations of the Business Organization along with enhanced maintenance and promotional activities through the use of a "public improvement district"

Certain items likely to be required and desired in a revitalization plan for the Old Town Center will be the basic types of infrastructure typically provided by the City and having public benefits beyond the Old Town Center area. These improvements should be built into the City's **Capital Bond Program**. Examples of these types of improvements might be street improvements, drainage improvements and basic utility up-grades.

Some capital projects, while benefiting the public at large, may have their primary benefits on property in the Old Town Center. These projects tend to be those that go beyond basic services; that provide amenities to an area. To the extent such projects increase the tax value of the private property they could be funded through the use of a **Tax Increment Financing District (TIF)**. This technique is where future increases in the taxes collected on improved properties is used to fund the public improvements that induced the raise in tax value.

There are several ways a TIF district could fund projects:

- The City could fund these projects out of G.O. Bonds and use the TIF funds to reimburse the City as tax increments are collected;
- The TIF district could sell TIF bonds to fund the improvements, using the tax increment to retire the TIF bonds; or
- The City could create the TIF district, allow the tax increments to accrue in a tax increment fund, and pay for improvements as funds permit (a pay as you go strategy).

Finally, in any of these types of revitalization efforts, on-going attention to managing, maintaining and promoting the area is of equal, or greater importance than the physical improvements. The use of a "**Public Improvement District**" (PID) to fund these types of activities should be considered. A PID, established by petition of the property owners creates

**Use targeted business retention program in cooperation with the chamber of commerce.**

One of the most important components of an industrial revitalization strategy for the Kealy Industrial area is to target the recommended business retention program to this area. (see page 61) With most economic growth coming from expanding businesses, retaining and enhancing existing businesses helps a community benefit from this growth. In addition, how a City treats its existing businesses in an area has a major effect on its ability to attract new businesses to that area.

The major components of a business retention strategy are:

- Build regular and strong lines of communications with existing businesses;
- Provide management and business support services;
- Provide quality infrastructure and service to business areas.

The Kealy Industrial area is an area where this type of program is needed. Building regular and strong lines of communications with these businesses will help strengthen their economic viability by increasing their access to available City services. A wide range of agencies should be encouraged to provide management and business support services to the Kealy Industrial area. Finally, providing quality infrastructure and service to the area is the most direct way the City's commitment to its long term economic health can be demonstrated. It establishes credibility as the City works with the businesses and other supportive organizations in carrying out other components of the industrial revitalization strategy.

**Recommendation**

**The City of Lewisville should develop special design treatment for the Main Street corridor within Old Town as part of the road improvements already planned.**

The plan should include the Old Town Center area and the blocks west to I-35E. The Main Street exit on Interstate 35E is the main entrance to the Old Town area. A special design treatment of the Main Street corridor eastward to Old Town Center would establish and reinforce the identity of the whole area. Currently, nothing tells the visitor or new resident that this is where Lewisville began. With Old Town Center being approximately a mile off the Interstate Highway, some way to link it to this Main Street exit is needed.

A special design treatment for this corridor could include such features as:

- special light standards in a historic motif;
- consistent landscaping along the right-of-way;
- street name signs with special graphic symbols, colors and text in keeping with the design character established for Old Town Center;
- use of brick or other special pavement treatments at cross walks along the corridor; and
- gateway areas at the start of the corridor with entrance monuments, landscaping and signage.

The intent of these improvements is to establish a strong link between the Main Street exit at I-35E and the Old Town Center area; create an identity for the Old Town area as a whole; and to signal to visitors and residents when they are in the area recognized by the City as Old Town. Strengthening an area's identity and giving it strong visual definition facilitates and supports many of the other revitalization efforts undertaken by residents, homeowner associations, property owners, business associations, and the City.

#### 4. Ensure Quality Development

An important Community Development goal is ensuring the development of high quality industrial and commercial land uses which improve the image of Lewisville while increasing and maintaining compatibility between industrial and commercial uses and residential areas. High quality development helps stabilize neighborhoods and serves to promote economic development in the city. When a city's trend is towards high quality development, new development is more likely to be of a high quality. This, in turn, will increase property values and stabilize or enhance the tax base.

While it is important that new development be of a high quality, it is also important that existing development be encouraged to improve its quality to be consistent with the city's new development and to ensure the economic viability of older commercial areas. This section addresses both new development and existing development, and discusses ways to promote high quality development and redevelopment.

##### Recommendation

**The City of Lewisville should adopt strategies for ensuring high quality new development.**

These strategies should include:

- Evaluating rezoning some industrial properties from "Heavy Industrial" to "Light Industrial";
- Modifying industrial zoning standards to better control industrial uses by strengthening standards for heavier, hazardous and high risk uses;
- Using the "campus industrial park" zoning district concept for the light industrial district; and
- Incorporating additional compatibility standards for commercial and industrial uses with residential adjacency.

Development standards ensure that a consistent level of quality is maintained in new development. While Lewisville's zoning ordinance and development code contain provisions such as landscaping and screening requirements which are critical to quality development, additional fine tuning to the Zoning Ordinance and Development Code would enhance the quality of development in Lewisville. Issues which should be addressed include controlling the location of heavy, high polluting industries, enhancing the curb appeal of industrial uses, and increasing residential adjacency requirements when industrial uses are adjacent to residential uses.

**Evaluate rezoning properties currently zoned "Heavy Industrial" to "Light Industrial." with the cooperation of the property owners.**

Some areas of Lewisville, especially those adjacent to residential uses, may be more appropriately zoned "Light Industrial" rather than "Heavy Industrial." Rezoning these areas would create a land use pattern that is more consistent with the image that Lewisville is working to achieve, and more consistent with the locational requirements of the types of industries which Lewisville is targeting in its economic development activities. In addition, the high impact uses permitted in the "Heavy Industrial" district are not compatible in proximity to residential zoning and should be located in specific heavy industrial areas of the city.

### **Modify industrial zoning standards.**

A number of heavy, high polluting industrial uses are permitted to be located anywhere within a "Heavy Industrial" District. Permitted high intensity uses include metal smelting, stockyards and slaughter houses, explosives manufacture, and wrecking yards. In many cities these high intensity uses typically are permitted only after going through another review process such as a Specific Use Permit process. Other permitted "Heavy Industrial" uses such as some of the more intense manufacturing uses, have characteristics which often require additional locational standards.

If a high impact use locates in an area the City has targeted for industrial park development, the likelihood of quality development coming into the area is diminished. Locational criteria for high impact uses should be developed and each use reviewed to ensure that these high impact uses do not have a detrimental effect on adjacent development.

Specific Use District Zoning should be required for the most intense high impact uses, and other uses should be required to meet specified conditions prior to locating in an area. These conditions should be written into the ordinance and should mandate special screening, spacing, and buffering requirements which will mitigate potential incompatibility problems. Examples of ordinance conditions which could be required for an explosives manufacture or storage plant, which is currently permitted by right in the "Heavy Industrial" district include:

1. Use shall be located no less than 2000' from a residential use or district.
2. Use shall have direct access to a major arterial and shall have two point of ingress and egress.
3. Buildings shall have 50 foot front, side and rear setbacks.

### **Consider using a "campus industrial park" zoning district concept**

New industrial development must have curb appeal to compete with other high quality development in Lewisville and the surrounding communities. Curb appeal can be enhanced through landscaping, setbacks, building materials, design requirements, open space areas and other amenities. Placing minimum requirements on campus industrial park development will ensure a higher quality of development. Examples of requirements that would enhance a development's curb appeal include:

- Increased building setbacks adjacent to thoroughfares.
- Front facade and building material requirements.
- Enhanced entranceway plantings.
- Minimum required open space areas, such as a requirement for 10% of the property to be in landscaped open space.
- Design requirements for the screening of loading docks and service bays from public view, or the requirement that these facilities be located behind the building.

### **Incorporate additional compatibility standards into development ordinances**

Industrial uses are generally incompatible with residential uses, and should not be located next to one another. When high intensity uses are located adjacent to residential uses, additional residential adjacency standards should be required to protect the residential uses. The City should incorporate into the General Development and Sign Ordinances standards which address the following issues:

- Building materials requirements: Require that buildings adjacent to residential uses be

made of certain materials, such as brick, aggregate concrete, stucco, or other equivalent, permanent architecturally finished building material. Metal and wood buildings should be prohibited.

- Access Requirements: Require that access to an industrial use not be through a residential area.
- Screening of Mechanical Equipment: Require that mechanical equipment, both roof mounted or on the ground, be screened from view of adjacent residential uses.
- Building Scale: Require that buildings adjacent to residential uses be similar in scale to the residential uses. Scale compatibility can be enhanced by similarities in the height of the structure; avoiding long, unbroken facades; increase setbacks; and landscaping and buffering.
- Screening: Require loading docks and service bays to be screened from adjacent residential uses.
- Landscaping: Require that trees be planted in the 25' side and rear setbacks when industrial uses are adjacent to residential uses to increase the effective screen between the two uses.
- Signs: Regulate signage when adjacent to residential uses. The size, lighting and location of signs should be regulated.

#### **Recommendation**

**The City of Lewisville should implement strategies for retrofitting existing development to current standards.**

Retrofitting existing development can be approached in two ways. First, in older areas where current standards are not appropriate, the City Council can develop a policy or development ordinance amendments which allow new or upgraded development in older areas of the community to be considered for certain variances when the overall spirit of the standards is still met. Alternative financing strategies should be encouraged on a case-by-case basis to retrofit existing development to current standards, such as forming private property umbrella groups and implementing Public Improvement Districts. Existing development must be retrofitted to remain competitive with new development. It is more difficult for owners of existing development to make improvements because retrofitting development can be more costly than when enhancements are made during initial development. Existing development cannot roll the costs of enhancements into the overall construction costs, as can new development. Therefore, it is necessary to develop alternative funding mechanisms for improvements to existing development.

Property and infrastructure enhancements can be funded through a Public Improvement District. The first step in the development of a Public Improvement District is the formation of a property owners group to develop the goals and objectives which the property owners wish to accomplish. Some programs which should be considered for retrofitting existing private development include the following:

- Programs for public tree plantings
- Landscaping and tree plantings in public rights-of-ways when land is not available for on-site enhancements
- Curb and gutter improvements
- Lighting enhancements

## 5. Plan Future of East Lewisville

East Lewisville, one of the six planning subareas identified during the data analysis phase of this project, showed the lowest level of development of all planning subareas within Lewisville. The area is predominately vacant land with small pockets of residential development characterized by small wood frame homes and mobile home parks. Most of these residential areas are just beginning to get basic water and sewer services.

The area is zoned a mix of heavy industrial, light industrial and agricultural, with most nonresidential development in the area primarily along the frontage of SH-121. These nonresidential uses tend to be the less desirable types of industrial uses. Many are in poor condition and some are vacant.

The U.S. Army Corp. of Engineers has control of a considerable tract of land north of SH-121 and south of the Lake Lewisville dam that is designated as a Wildlife Management and Conservation area. The flood plain of the Elm Fork of the Trinity River cuts through the area, running south and slightly west from the Lake Lewisville dam to the city limits in the southeast corner of Lewisville at I-35E. Much of this flood plain area is used for sanitary landfills, three of which are active and one that has not been started yet.

The Comprehensive Plan and current zoning for the majority of the area calls for industrial development. However, the area's lack of infrastructure will inhibit its development in a modern industrial park form that would be competitive with Vista Ridge, LakePointe and other industrial areas within Lewisville and surrounding communities. The most likely future development scenario, without a change in City policy toward the area, is piecemeal development of the types of heavy industrial uses not wanted by other communities.

During the Goal setting process residents were unclear what East Lewisville could or should become. They saw neighborhoods in need of basic services, land subject to flooding from the Elm Fork, questions of the future development of completed land fill sites, and the potential for undesirable industrial uses that might be attracted to the area on a piecemeal basis. They also saw potential opportunities for environmental preservation in the Elm Fork and quality development because of the SH-121 by-pass; the influence of high quality residential development in north Carrollton, Legacy Park in west Plano, and the influence of Waters Ridge and LakePointe development in Lewisville and a revitalized Old Town.

What is missing is any consensus or clear direction for the future development of East Lewisville. The central question is: How can problems be addressed in such a way that the City is able to capture the positive opportunities that exist in the area and ensure the full integration of this part of Lewisville into the community?

### Recommendation

The City of Lewisville should continue to work with the North Central Texas Council of Governments' Common Vision Plan to develop a comprehensive flood plain management plan for the Elm Fork of the Trinity River.

One of the major influencing factors effecting the future development of East Lewisville is the flood plain of the Elm Fork. The City's flood insurance rate maps (FIRM) show the current limits of the flood plain for general planning purposes. They do not however, show the extent to which the flood plain could be reclaimed, the alternative methods that could be used, or the future uses possible under different reclamation policies.

Citizen input during the Goals setting process saw the Elm Fork flood plain as an

environmental asset and opportunity for creation of additional natural open space and recreation areas within Lewisville. They also recognized the development potential in the non-flood plain areas nearby.

The members of the Lewisville City Council and staff should continue involvement with the NCTCOG Common Vision Plan in an effort to ultimately plan for the future of East Lewisville.

#### **Recommendation**

Lewisville should develop and adopt a Master Development Plan for East Lewisville. Once the policy direction for the future development of the Elm Fork flood plain is determined in the NCTCOG Common Vision Plan, work should start on the development of a Master Development Plan for the entire East Lewisville planning subarea. The creation of an overall vision and long range plan for future development would provide property owners, potential developers and the City with a clear direction for future decisions related to the area's growth and development. It would ensure that all parties are working toward common goals and the same vision.

The Master Development Plan for the East Lewisville planning subarea should provide:

- An overall vision of the area;
- Specific proposals for how the flood plain management plan should be handled as it relates to particular properties;
- Proposals for the future use of land fill areas;
- Determination of future industrial and commercial development with special consideration for the SH-121 by-pass and the existing route into Old Town Lewisville;
- Plans, policies, and programs for residential development in the area and the preservation and enhancement of existing residential areas;
- A capital improvement plan for extending infrastructure to the area to serve existing development and to support the type and quality of development desired in the area; and
- An implementation plan with both a community development and an economic development component to ensure public and private are coordinated toward the area's vision and common goals.

The process for initiating the Master Development Plan should begin with meetings involving the City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission, with an outside consultant to be used once a direction for the plan is established.

#### **Recommendation**

The City of Lewisville should work with the surrounding communities and the Texas Department of Transportation to find ways to accelerate construction of the SH 121 by-pass.

One of the main constraints to development in the East Lewisville area, in addition to the lack of a common vision and plan, is poor access. Currently, the main access is from SH-121, a state highway predominately developed to rural standards, with some four lane sections recently developed because of growing traffic volumes. The proposed SH-121 by-pass will provide an additional east-west facility. Plans call for a limited access highway to link the eastern edge of Lewisville at the current SH-121 to the Vista Ridge area of I-35E. This facility will open up the east Lewisville area to I-35E and to DFW Airport to the west

and to Legacy park in Plano to the east. It will also facilitate access to Lewisville from north Carrollton.

With increased access to the area, Lewisville can expect increased interest in real estate development in the area. If an overall plan is in place to direct this development interest, implementation can proceed more rapidly and with greater private sector participation in infrastructure development.

The City of Lewisville should continue discussions as soon as possible with the City of Carrollton and the Texas Department of Transportation on ways to accelerate construction. Consideration may have to be given to: participation in right-of-way acquisition; funding of portions of the construction; or providing development incentives to increase property owner participation.

#### **6. Create Strong Community Image**

A strong community image can shape how people live within a community and the way they feel about their life in the community. Citizen's feelings concerning quality of life within a community shape the community's self-image and the image the community projects to others. The environment of the City, both its natural setting and its built environment, reflects the community's image and in turn shapes that image for others. In addition to a community's physical qualities, the more intangible qualities of the community equally shape its image and perceived quality of life. Qualities like friendliness, tolerance, can-do attitudes, openness, and the spirit of cooperation and community participation are important.

The City can strengthen the community's self-image through programs which provide a physical cohesiveness, as well as through outreach programs designed to bring the City to its citizens. This section discusses both public and private strategies to strengthen Lewisville's community image to reflect the citizen's goals of a progressive city that is family oriented and friendly and that has a high quality natural and built environment.

#### **Recommendation**

**The City of Lewisville should develop a beautification program to enhance the community's image.**

A citywide beautification program would supplement the existing landscape ordinance, which is primarily focused on new and redeveloping private development. Beautification programs are typically a partnership between the private and public sectors, and have a broader impact than individual pieces of private property. The goal of a beautification program is to create a strong community image by focusing public and private improvements in high-visibility areas. A beautification program should include:

- A program to provide gateway improvements at major entrances into the City.
- A beautification policy which encourages private participation in the landscaping of City-owned parks, gateways, open spaces, rights-of-ways, and medians.
- A tree planting program along major thoroughfares of the City to provide a continuity through specific areas of the City.
- Completion of Lewisville's hike and bike trail system to provide active and passive recreation opportunities and to link Lewisville's neighborhoods.

One goal is to preserve the good aspects of Lewisville's natural setting and enhance the environment through landscaping, parks and open spaces, and trees, and by improving the overall quality of its physical attributes. The community should build its physical image

around its natural assets (trees, the lake, and the creek system) and through quality development with increased attention to tree planting and landscaping. Lewisville's physical image should be improved through gateway improvements at key entrances to the City, corridor landscaping, and improved and informative signage. The following beautification efforts to enhance the community's image are recommended.

**Create program for gateway area improvements.**

A program to provide gateway improvements at major entrances into the City should be developed. A clear delineation of the City's major entrances gives both visitors and residents a sense of what Lewisville is about, and helps to define the image that the City's citizens wish to project. Successful gateway programs have been completed in other area cities, such as in Las Colinas and in Grapevine. These entranceway features enhance the image of the community.

A gateway program should incorporate the following steps:

- Identify the location of primary and, if desired, secondary gateways into Lewisville. This determination should evaluate location as well as land availability.
- Work with the state to put the names of streets on the overpasses.
- Develop a design for all gateway improvements. These can be a combination of signage and landscaping, and should be developed within a budget that considers both initial production and installation costs as well as long term maintenance costs.
- Develop an implementation program to fund markers and landscaping at major entrances over a certain time period. Funding programs should include encouraging private sector financing of gateway improvements.

**Develop a beautification policy.**

The City should develop a beautification policy to provide direction and policy for the overall beautification of the City within public parks, open spaces, and City-owned rights of way. This policy would standardize City-wide procedures and guidelines necessary for the private sector to make landscape improvements on public property. This program should work with any current or future public landscaping programs and should include the involvement of the Parks, Planning, Streets, and Transportation Departments and the Attorney's Office.

Beautification policies should provide direction on the following issues:

- Scope of the policies, which could include plantings on medians; in public parks; on parkways within City rights-of-ways; tree plantings and planters on sidewalks within City rights-of-ways; placement of plaques and monuments; and plantings in floodway areas.
- Who may participate and specifics of a written agreement which must be made.
- How citizens participate in a beautification project.
- Any indemnification and hold harmless requirements.
- Standards for any plantings, including locational and height requirements, visibility requirements and other City standards; maintenance schedules; tree size requirements, etc.
- Reservation of the City to use property in any way necessary (such as for the installation of utilities).
- Requirements of the sponsoring party, which could include development costs (tools, labor, plant material, soil amendments); the design, installation, repair, and

maintenance of any irrigation systems; time frame of maintenance obligations; and planting requirements (time of year or type of planting required.)

- Specifics of City involvement and review of beautification projects.

#### **Develop a community tree planting program.**

A tree planting program which targets major corridors and public areas for landscaping enhancements should be developed to enhance the overall image of the City. Varied tree plantings can be used to create identity for different areas within the City. For instance, regularly spaced trees of one type give an area a more traditional feel, while irregular groupings of multiple types of trees establish a less formal feel.

While the beautification policy spells out the City's overall policies for beautification of public land, this program develops specific beautification projects in conjunction with the private sector to landscape Lewisville's major thoroughfares and other public spaces.

A tree planting program should have the following components:

- Identify a private sector entity to work with (e.g. the Dallas Parks Foundation, or "Keep Lewisville Beautiful");
- Identify major corridors for enhancements (e.g. I-35E or Main Street west of I-35E to the city limit);
- Develop guidelines for public and private sector plantings:
  - types of trees and bushes;
  - minimum sizes;
  - maintenance standards;
  - replacement requirements;
  - requirements for compatibility with private landscaping plans;
- Development of standards for tree placement:
  - location along ROW;
  - spacing, based on types and size;
  - location relative to visibility at intersections and drive ways;
- Public and private implementation strategies:
  - process for initiating an improvement project;
  - level of private sector support;
  - development of specific designs;
  - approval process for adjacent property owners and City;
  - maintenance agreements.

Once a tree planting program is developed, the main responsibility for its operations should rest with the private sector organization, with the City playing a supportive role.

#### **Complete the hike and bike system**

The hike and bike trail system throughout Lewisville should be completed to provide active and passive recreation opportunities and link Lewisville's neighborhoods. Completion of the hike and bike trail system was a major goal mentioned by citizens during the Goal setting process. A strategy to complete the system should be implemented and should include:

- Recognition of the hike and bike trail plan as an important Goal to achieve;
- During the development review process for new development, City staff should place increased emphasis on the hike and bike trail when reviewing development applications that have the potential to contribute to the system;

- For existing development, identify opportunities to go back in and make required linkages which were not implemented at time of development. The City should look at solutions such as joint agreements with private property owners for limited access and providing improvements in the public rights-of-way when need;
- If there are problems in strictly implementing the plan, look at creative ways of achieve the needed links during the development review process and in existing development.

#### **Recommendation**

**The City of Lewisville should develop a community outreach program to strengthen communications between the City and its citizens.**

This strategy should increase public awareness of City facilities, services, and activities and to promote greater understanding of community issues, participation by citizens, and pride and commitment to the City. Intangible qualities such as friendliness, tolerance, can-do attitudes, openness, and the spirit of cooperation and community participation shape the community's image and perceived quality of life. People who understand the City's goals, objectives and accomplishments and who have a pride and commitment in their community are more likely to become involved in City programs and contribute to the City.

The following programs would help inform citizens about City projects and promote citizen participation.

#### **Create a "Customer Service" ethic for Lewisville**

A program to emphasize the value of providing high quality customer service should be developed and implemented in Lewisville. The effectiveness of any outreach program depends on the City staff being perceived as courteous and efficient. The City should look for ways to make the delivery of City services more user friendly, courteous, and efficient. The aim should be to maintain and enhance hospitable and friendly relationships and not create adversarial ones. Customer service should be emphasized by:

- Increased emphasis on the provision of high quality customer service by City management;
- Training City employees at every level on customer service techniques and the benefits of high quality customer service; and
- Including the provision of user-friendly customer service as an evaluation criteria in employee performance evaluations.

#### **Continue, monitor and refine newsletter.**

The City should continue production and distribution of the "Lewisville Horizon" to Lewisville residents. The City should monitor the newsletter format for effectiveness and refine it as needed. Other techniques for communicating with the citizens of Lewisville should be considered; including expanding the newsletter format or producing a community magazine or annual report.

#### **Facilitate open house activities.**

Programs such as open houses or town hall meetings are opportunities for citizens to have face-to-face contact with City staff and elected officials. Open houses can be held several times a year, and can either be scheduled independent of Council meetings, or can follow regularly scheduled Council meetings.

**Coordinate community volunteers.**

Increased attention should be made to promote and utilize volunteers in community activities. A program to facilitate and coordinate the activities of volunteers would benefit both the City and citizens who want to become involved in their community in a structured way.

**Improve quality of audio and video services.**

During the goals sessions, citizens commented on the poor quality of the audio and video services during City Council meetings. The main complaints was that it was very difficult to hear discussions during meetings, the quality of graphics was poor, and that the television broadcast needed to be improved. High quality audio and video services will allow people who attend Council meetings or view them on cable television to better understand and participate in local government. The City should improve the quality of the audio and video in the City Council Chambers and as broadcast on cable television.